

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claim 1-4 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider in view of the amendments and remarks as set forth below.

Entry of Amendment

Applicant submits that entry of the present Amendment and full consideration thereof is appropriate. Applicant has removed one sentence removed from the specification and one phrase from claim 1 which were the subject of the objection to the specification and the rejection under 35 USC 112, first paragraph. By removing these limitations, the rejections are removed. Accordingly, Applicant submits that no new issues are caused by this removal.

Telephone Interview

Applicant notes with appreciation the telephone interview conducted with Examiner Ruddock on January 11, 2007.

During the interview, the possibility of removing the sentence from the specification and this phrase from claim 1 was discussed. The Examiner agreed that this removal would overcome the current rejections. However, the Examiner indicated that the previously removed art rejections would have to be considered again.

Specification

The Examiner objected to the specification as containing new matter. By way of the present amendment, Applicant has canceled the sentence which included the objectionable material. Thus, this objection is overcome.

Rejection under 35 USC 112

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with a written description requirement. By way of the present amendment, Applicant has canceled the

phrase from claim 1 which was objectionable. Accordingly, this rejection is also considered to be overcome.

In the rejection of April 27, 2006, the Examiner included the rejections of claims 1, 2 and 5 under 35 USC 103 as being obvious Lewis (US Patent 3,403,070) in view of Gordon et al. (US Patent 5,650,384) and Weilrauch (GB Patent 2137080). Applicant submits that even with the removal of the phrase from claim 1 which relates to the material of the resin, this art rejection will still not apply.

The Examiner is referred to the remarks in the Amendment of July 27, 2006. As pointed out there, neither Lewis nor Weilrauch teach the use of a bath sponge. Instead both of these references teach bristles for use in brushes and mops. The Examiner cited the Gordon et al. reference to show a bath sponge. Applicants submit that it would not be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to utilize bristles such as shown in Lewis and Weilrauch in a bath sponge such as shown in Gordon et al. The bristles suggested by Lewis and Weilrauch are for use in brushes and mops and would be considerably too stiff to use in a bath sponge. Applicants submit that it would not only be obvious to use these bristles in the bath sponge, in fact the teachings of Lewis and Weilrauch would teach against the use of these bristles in a bath sponge. That is, the references describe the bristles as being stiff. The use of stiff bristles in a bath sponge is typically not desireable and accordingly would not be obvious to utilize such bristles in the bath sponge of Gordon et al.

Furthermore, the claims clearly point out that the fibers of the sponge include a foam body and a resin layer covering the foam body. While the Lewis and Weilrauch reference discuss a two layered bristle, neither of them are for use in a bath sponge. While Gordon et al. shows a bath sponge, it does not teach the use of multiple layer fibers. Thus, none of the references individually teach the claimed subject invention. Further, Applicant submits that it would not be obvious to combine the teachings. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1 and the claims which depend thereon are not obvious over this three-way combination.

Furthermore, Applicant specifically points out claim 5 which describes the fibers as being made from a substance with high density and having coarse pores without a full membrane. Applicant notes that these features are not described in the references. Furthermore, it is noted

that the Examiner has not even alleged that these features are shown in the references. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 5 is especially allowable over this combination of references.

Conclusion

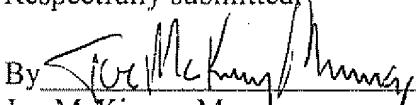
In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the specification and claims now contain no new matter and are supported by the specification. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of all the claims is respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert F. Gnuse Reg. No. 27,295 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted

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